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Grumpy bears
A season of hibernation on page 2

Opening doors
How kindness welcomes all on page 4

Dog days
Local author heads to New York to celebrate book success on page 7

Weather pending, Sir Sam's Ski and Ride is set to open for the season this coming weekend. Pictured, some enthusiastic riders from last season. /FILE

December 2, 2025 - January 5, 2026
Bennett's
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Marlaine Bennett, 3rd Generation Owner
with her dog Mia Bennett

Cranky-pants

DEB REED
Wind in the Attic

THAT'S WHAT a retired friend, once a kindergarten teacher, used to call preschoolers having tantrums. She'd witnessed many. Time-outs were usually her strategy for recovery.

When cranky black bears finally decide to slip into winter hibernation, they're also ready for downtime. The dark season lures us all into warm caves, many of us also spent and listless. Seniors especially.

I don't feel qualified yet for supreme dotage. I still love pranks, bubblegum, ghost stories and *Home Alone.* But my numerical age is undeniably real, and a worrisome new irritability which once waited dutifully at the backs of lines, is now on high alert. Shorter fuse. Get off my property! Like an old bear.

I'm guessing that anyone with more than a handful of decades under a belt - not to mention extra tummy there too - has earned some rights to grumpiness. We're getting longer in the tooth. That less-than-lovely imagery derives from measuring a horse's receding gums to determine its age. With such seemingly giant teeth, and a reluctance to be inspected, we might all find ourselves snarling more than we used to.

In the merry springtime of our lives, we gather vigour. We play with it all summer. Brightness drops away in autumn, and drowsiness shrouds winter. Like bears, we chew the fat, then sleep on it. Our life cycles are simple: nap, wake up, fill up, nap again. Bears get annoyed when this precious routine is interrupted, especially where fatigue, territory, bellies or kids are concerned. Bears fight tooth and nail when their senses run amok. Like kindergarteners. Like seniors.

I'm becoming a little more bear-like. My tolerance for certain human behaviours seems to be eroding. Where I used to 'let it go', random acts of rudeness which I once ignored can now preoccupy and infuriate. I don't have to battle tooth and nail to show I'm bothered, however. Instead, I'll 'use my words' mildly when people confound me or cross the line. But there seems to be more boundary-crossing than ever before. Personal space. Noise. Litter.

What defines rudeness? To me, it's selfishness. Not considering another's rights to safety, peace, or territory. My latest peeves are around city transit users. Stopping cold on stairs to check a phone. Using spare bus or train seats for dogs, shopping bags or legs while others stand. Passengers playing memes or music minus earbuds. Meal garbage left behind.

I'm getting cranky just listing my transit woes. It's not only cities, I tell myself. It's a faster world. People are extra rushed, tired, scared, stressed…

'Wind your neck in', I decide, using common British vernacular. I'll just shift my mindset. If I end up publicly exploding with resentment, it's likely only I whose blood pressure skyrockets. What could I change with a sudden confrontation? How might I guide my own nervous system if agitation gets the better of me?

I could choose to relax. It's smarter and safer. I'll collect observations and feelings. I'll simply witness. Not trigger. Like a kindergarten teacher.

CountyLife

The following inserts are being distributed with County Life this week:

Canadian Tire

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Todd's Independent *

All inserts are to selected distribution areas.

For information on how your flyer can be inserted each week in County Life please contact Melissa Armstrong at **613-332-2002** or **melissa@haliburtonpress.com**

What do you seek?

TERESA JORDAN
Community Living Contemplations

NEAR MY home there is a road that winds along the side of the hill. In the early 2000s, my municipality named all the roads rather than the tried-and-true numbers and nicknames that had been used over the decades. In doing so, they often use family names of long owned farms or names of culturally significant landmarks.

It was an interesting time as the names were released, and we had to get to know the new road names. The road that winds along the hill had two farms on it owned by the Beer family. The resulting road name then became Beers Road. Now all these years later, we are all quite acquainted with the road names. Beers Road, we all have to remember, since there is almost never a sign posted. Within days of the sign being installed, it is always stolen, and all over cottage country places are now adorned with the unique sign directing their company to a certain favourite beverage.

I feel like there might be a longer-term solution, but for now the municipality replaces it a few times a year; a cottage decorating is enhanced in the same number. There are countless road signs all over the place, however, Beers Road has a special appeal, it stands out, people relate and are compelled to break the law, even to be able to declare that their spaces have a similar theme. It's a sought-after prize.

What do you seek? What thing or element or sign do you look for to enhance your spaces? How do you know when you have found it? At this holiday time of shopping and ads we are bombarded by images and ideas for things we did not yet know we needed. It is easy to get swept up and overwhelmed by all the options.

Understanding what makes you happy, what brings you joy reliably is a place to start. Get clear about that and you can cut through the noise to focus on what is true to you, what is important, what you need. Once you know, it is my greatest hope that you will seek it out and not settle for less. The local road sign is a stand out, find your Beers Road sign, avoid theft, and seek out your road to more joy.

Regarding winter fires

STEVE GALEA
Beyond 35

OUTDOORS ENTHUSIASTS love winter campfires in varying degrees. But I think we can all agree that anything past the flash-point of clothing is unacceptable.

For some of us, there is nothing better than a camp fire on a frigid winter day. Other less enthusiastic types prefer home heating and a good pair of slippers.

There was a time when fires were home heating, however. Back in those cave-dwelling days, you'd be weathering winter in your cave and sitting by the fire when suddenly it would go out. If you were the handy type, you might try to diagnose why and perhaps even fix it. But, eventually, after several attempts, your wife would brow beat you into calling a professional. Before long a representative from the local cave and heating company would arrive with their wagon to hopefully fix your fire. This took a while since the wheel had not yet been invented.

"What seems to be the problem?" the technician would always ask.

"Our fire went out last night," you'd say.

"I've been telling him we need to have our fire serviced for months now," his wife would add.

"Is this going to be expensive?" the husband would then ask.

This would cause the fire technician to examine the fire and then note, "Looks like you still have a couple of coals. I think this is going to be an easy fix."

He'd then bring in some kindling, a few larger sticks, a log or two, and something to fan it all with, and before long the cave would have heat again.

This would be accompanied by the age-old cry, "Close the door kids! We're not heating the outdoors!"

Yet, even as the technician started to leave the caveman soon began thinking that it would be a wise idea to take a cave and heating technician along on his next winter hunting and gathering expeditions.

And, if that cave and heating technician proved to be a better hunter or angler, the early outdoorsman quickly learned to build campfires for himself. Soon after, they added to the new technology by inventing the fire poking stick.

The technology grew in leaps and bounds from there on in.

/KAREN LODNON staff

Originally, the outdoors enthusiast used fire for its intended purpose – to singe arm hair and eyebrows. But eventually, we learned there were other valuable uses. For instance, a good campfire acted as a reliable indicator that helped determine what member of the hunting party had the "silent but deadlies."

And because of the invention of the campfire, the "Kiss the Chef" barbecue apron was eventually created. I'm sure there were other important developments too.

The point is we outdoors enthusiasts have come to love a good winter campfire, perhaps even more than Ministry of Natural Resources fire crews do.

From a safety perspective, a good fire makes sense in winter because it is unlikely to spread beyond the confines of its original location – unless, of course, a gassy person is lurking among the group. But, again, the fire makes that easy to detect.

From an outdoor recreation perspective, a winter fire is fantastic – in no small part because the snow makes it easy to lose the marshmallows. More than that, a good fire keeps the ice out of your beard, hair, and clothes. It keeps you from getting chilled too. Best of all, it allows you to show off your campfire culinary skills.

Or it would, if you could just find the marshmallows.

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SIRCHlight *Creating connection and resilience – together*

Opening doors

Jackson* was living on the streets before he even turned 16.

A tumultuous home life pushed him into challenging circumstances long before a teenager should face them.

He'd been kicked out of his mom's house. His dad was out of the picture.

Children's Aid Society was involved for a while ... until sweet 16 came along.

After that, CAS closed the case on him. Every official form of assistance seemingly shut its doors at once.

When the government found out he was no longer living at home, even the extra bit of financial help stopped coming.

His mother could no longer afford rent, and had her own problems.

Jackson was on his own.

And by that point he didn't seem to want anyone's help.

Maybe he had his reasons too.

Growing up in the system can leave its scars after all.

Only Jackson knows.

What's clear is he wanted to do things his way.

All forms of help offered him were roundly rejected.

All but one, as the creeping shadow of starvation loomed larger in his life.

When youth worker Jenny first met him at North Hastings Community Services (NHCS), he refused every form of help she tried to offer. He trusted no one.

But he kept coming back for one thing: the free meals SIRCH continuously provides to NHCS.

"When people are starving, that's all they can think about," Jenny said. "It doesn't even allow them the space to think about how they can help other parts of their life."

A simple meal doesn't just fill a stomach — it creates safety, a spark of hope, and even connection.

Jenny says he started bringing meals to the other homeless people he was living with on the streets.

In Jackson's case the meals not only kept him alive, but kept his friends alive too. Those connections would eventually present a way out.

A living situation became available in the city, and because of Jackson's young age – and his compassion – his friends on the street encouraged him to take it.

Last Jenny heard, Jackson has a roof over his head. He's warm. He's fed.

He's even attending school.

"But," Jenny said, smiling, "He just recently came back (to Bancroft), and came into the centre when he was here. He came in to say hi, and he gave us all big hugs and said 'thank you so much.'"

From a guy who trusted nobody in the world, gratitude is powerful. Trust doesn't come easy for those who have been through so much in their lives.

All it takes is one open door.

** 'Jackson' is a pseudonym used by the author to protect the privacy of the individual in this story.*

By David Dengis

Do you have newspapers from before 1980?

The Haliburton Highlands Digital Archives project is seeking copies of newspapers from Minden and Haliburton to add to their collection of over 7000 digitized papers. Unfortunately there are some gaps in the archives, and project organizers are seeking community support. If you have papers from before 1980, **please visit www.hhda.ca to help complete the collection.**

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Getting crafty

Wilberforce held their annual craft sale at the Lloyd Watson Community Centre the last weekend of November in the heart of the community. Dozens of artists and artisans had tables filled with handmade products, ready to be purchased for the festive season ahead. /TIM YANO staff photographer

Charities working to bring Christmas magic to every child

ADAM FRISK
County Life Staff

As the holiday season arrives in Haliburton, local charities are stressing the importance of ensuring every child, from infants to teenagers, has a gift to open on Christmas morning.

While the need for food and essential resources remains critical, local programs are focusing on delivering joy, hope, and crucial stress relief to struggling families in the Haliburton area. Inclusion is also a key part for the local organizations.

"Everything that we do is about making sure that they feel included in the community and kind of are having these same experiences that every child should be having," Carrie Truman, executive director of Kawartha-Haliburton Children's Foundation, said in a telephone interview. "So that when they go to school after the holiday break, they feel included. They can also talk about their new toys and everything, and that they feel included with everything that's going on."

The Central Food Network echoed this sentiment, noting the desire for joy and excitement on Christmas morning.

"It's the magic of the season," said Tina Jackson, executive director of Central Food Network. "Everybody wants to have that bit of joy on Christmas morning, and it's important that every child gets that."

Jackson said the gifts also provide support for parents in households that are already struggling with basic necessities. With the added financial pressure of the holiday season and the rising winter costs, it can feel overwhelming.

"For many of the households that we're helping, there is such a high level of stress and anxiety year-round, but particularly during the holidays," she explained. "Just for parents alone, the stress relief of knowing that they've got an extra hand, I think takes a lot of the pressure off."

Keep an eye out for local toy drives across the county. Drop-offs can be found in local grocery stores, shopping centres, and post offices. The local high school Interact Club recently completed their community toy drive, which provides toys, gift cards, and a variety of presents local kids of all ages can open up on Christmas morning.

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Send your letters to the editor to emily@haliburtonpress.com. Letters must be signed and include a phone number.

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Monotony

THE CONCEPT of monotony often carries with it a burden of boredom. A weight that is tied to the term that sucks the living colour from it; a stamp of greyness and deflation.

We all get stuck in the loops. Wake up. Go to work. Eat to fill our bodies. Sleep to rest our minds.

EMILY STONEHOUSE
County Life Editor

Pay the bills, do the laundry, wash the dishes.

And the cycle continues. Day after day.

People try to run from the idea of monotony. Hop on a plane, try a new food, start a different relationship. Break free from the shackles of the every day.

I used to think it was something to be feared. That monotony would replace colour with calmness, brightness with boredom.

But I have recently learned that there is beauty in the boredom.

That the consistency of the every day are the little puzzle pieces that a life is built around.

Coffee with maple syrup. Adding notes to lunch boxes. Peeling clementines. Brushing hair into ponytails. A kiss on the forehead as they dash out the door. An outfit picked to reflect the day. Typing, typing, typing. Dreams of a book. Asking questions. Waves on the street corners. Adding to cart. Grocery store sales. Pickups from dance classes. Slush in the doorway. Spaghetti Sundays. Bubble baths. Laps and laps around the kitchen island in a little red race car. A kiss on the nose as they drift off to sleep, and a promise that they are safe, they are protected, they are loved.

It seems like the days are long; our bodies crash into bed with a level of exhaustion sworn we've never felt before, while our minds stay whirring, already planning the next day.

But the years are short. We blow out birthday candles for another chapter closed, the next one just beginning.

And with that whoosh of air we reflect. On the highs, the lows.

All those pieces of the puzzle meticulously placed together to build a life around us. The consistency of the every day.

And I miss it. Each and every season that came before this one.

The newborn wiggles, the imaginative puppet shows, the Barbies and the earth worms and the bonfires.

So many sparkles I didn't take the time to celebrate because I felt I was stuck on the ferris wheel of monotony. Around and around we go, each day not that much different than the last, but a shift so gradually occurring, inching its way in each time the sun sets.

We are told that too much of the same thing isn't good. That as humans, we crave adventure, excitement, accelerated consumption.

But what if we were built to find the simple joys of the every day. How lucky are we to start a day with coffee and maple syrup. To end the day with a kiss on the nose.

There is beauty in the boredom, colour in the calmness.

Each moment, each shift, each day, another puzzle piece added to build a life around us.

And slowly but surely yet ever so quickly, that puzzle takes shape, and we are left craving the simplicity of days gone by.

Don't rush the process. Find the simple joys.

And celebrate the sparkles each day brings.

Top 10 reasons why people put up Santa Claus and reindeer displays

IT'S THAT time again. Throughout the land, people are festooning their property with Christmas decorations and displays. One of the most popular typed is the Santa and reindeer variety. Why should you do that, you might ask? Here are the top 10 reasons:

STEVE GALEA
Humour Columnist

1. To act as decoys for the real thing.
2. To find out who is hunting deer out of season.
3. To keep the local elves on their toes.
4. So the other people with Santa/reindeer displays don't think they are all that special.
5. To free up space in the garage.
6. Because those lifelike reindeer are cheaper than archery targets.
7. Because it's better than your original idea of putting up a display of disgruntled elves in a sweatshop.
8. To distract from the fact that your window sills still need painting.
9. To give local teen snowball enthusiasts even more targets.
10. To remind people of the real meaning of Christmas.

Layers

Branches arching over the trail, veiled in a fresh layer of Snow,
blotting the boot prints that came before, as if they were never here, a pair of deer bounding across the trail,
disappearing as soon as they appear, my eyes trailing the smear of fur as the deer blur into the bark of trees,
fleeing deeper into the sanctuary of forest that sprawls beyond the trail,
their hooves dimpling the unsullied Snow,
I stare into the spaces between the trees, expecting the deer, to somehow reappear,
the pillars of birches, pale as bones, springing from Snow, growing in a row along this piece of trail,
scraps of skin dangling from their trunks, one of the birches catching my eye,
as I clomp across the trail towards it,
clouds of my Breath painting Air, like the Breaths of those that came before me, before they disappeared,
Air, still as the trees standing in the forest, as if the snowfall muffled Wind as well as the earth,
my footsteps denting Snow, as I approach the birch tree, a fissure splitting its trunk,
layers of thin birch skin stripped away to reveal the core of the tree,
my fingers slipping out of their mitts to feel the jaggedness of the wound scarring the trunk of the tree,
wondering what caused such a deep fissure to form, whether it was storms or disease that maimed the tree,
its branches arching over the trail, reaching towards branches on the other side,
the space separating them, once filled with leaves that grazed one another before Wind snatched them away,
I stay by the birch, my fingers feeling the gash on its trunk, my hands trying to bandage what can't be healed,
but still, the birch grows here, amongst the others, all in a row, scraps of birch skin dangling from its trunk,
past where the injury occurred, too many layers to count, as I reach up with my fingers to peel off a scrap,
but stop mid-way, leaving it be, not wanting to further wound the tree that bares its scars for all to see,
unlike humans that keep their hurts hidden beneath layers of flesh, sometimes sealed too deep to even feel,
I think to myself,
as my fingers trickle their way down the birch's trunk, lingering at the fissure before I take my hand away,
standing here, alongside the row of birches, springing from Snow, peering down at the scars
and spots that speckle the skin on the backs of my hands, the seasons of Sun and
cold that have weathered them,
as I stand here, mittenless, in the middle of the trail, breathing Air that invigorates my body
and clears my mind,
the boot prints that I leave behind, will soon be cloaked in another layer of Snow, muffling the earth,
soothing its wounds,
while the branches of birches and other trees, arch over the trail,
gnarled fingers reaching towards something that's no longer there,
like clouds of my Breath dissolving into Air.

Sylvie Kalenda

Returning champ offering fitness goals support

THOMAS SMITH
County Life Staff

Karen Koehler runs with Buncho in the canicross event at the 2025 IFSS Dryland Mushing World Championships. The duo took home gold. /submitted

Nothing can stop Karen Koehler and her canine companions.

At the International Federation of Sledding Sports 2025 Dryland Championships held in Minocqua, Wisconsin, Koehler returned to Haliburton County triumphantly with both a gold and silver medal.

Having visited Minocqua last year, Koehler says that the course for the championships this year has had more hills, posing a challenge to both her, and her dogs Buncho and Really.

Buncho, at nine years old, is a faster dog than Koehler normally races with. Koehler and Buncho competed in canicross and with the hills, Koehler had to be careful while travelling downhills to not overpower Buncho during the canicross competition.

On Sunday, Koehler raced in the bikejoring competition with her dog Really.

Racing over two days by bikejoring and running, the championships were muddy and a challenge for Koehler and her dogs to conquer.

Racing in the women's 50+ age group, Koehler won a gold in canicross and a silver medal in bikejoring.

Koehler says that after she won gold and heard the Canadian anthem, she was overcome with emotion.

"It was crazy," said Koehler.

This past September, Koehler contributed to a book titled *Passion, Purpose, and Possibilities: Transforming Dreams Into Reality*. In the book, Koehler shares her inspiring story of overcoming her fears and her journey with fitness towards racing with her dogs. Cathay Derksen is the primary author, and 23 other women contributed to the book.

The book has become a bestseller. To celebrate her accomplishment, Koehler visited New York City to see the book advertised in Times Square.

Koehler says that her writings in the book encapsulate what she strives to offer others with her health and life business, for people to conquer their fears and discover new things about themselves.

When Koehler first started racing with her dogs, she did not always take home medals. It was through perseverance and her own training that she began to take home gold.

Now, Koehler feels at the peak of her athletic career. With her coaching business still getting started, she hopes to reach more people and help change lives.

With medical services lacking in Ontario, improving your health and increasing your fitness levels can not only save you anguish, but help you financially as well, says Koehler.

As part of her coaching process, Koehler can teach you how to build a fitness community, tricks for working out at home, how to exercise outside year round, and healthy eating habits.

"A lot of obstacles are in our mind," said Koehler. "We live in a beautiful area. We need to get out of our homes and walk."

With less than $200, it is possible to have all the fitness equipment you need to stay in shape and see results.

Koehler's business, Buncho Momentum, can be found at bunchomomentum.com. You can also find her latest posts and event listings on her Facebook page of the same name.

"If people want to make a change, you need to get committed to the why," said Koehler. "I wanted to play with my dogs."

Calling all elves!

Once again, the Haliburton Echo and Minden Times will be showcasing the elves of the community. Do you have an Elf on the Shelf who has returned this year? One thing we know for sure is that these elves love to see themselves in the newspaper!

Send pictures of your Elf on the Shelf and the adventures they get into to **emily@haliburtonpress.com before Dec. 19**, for a chance to feature your family friend with our readers.

Not intended to solicit properties or clients currently listed

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- 2 bedroom, 2 bathroom, 2019 Royal Home. Large deck surrounding home
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1110 SEDGWICK ROAD $930,000

100 acres of countryside. Separate building w/ public health approved commercial kitchen w/ high quality, commercial grade appliances. Ideal for launching/expanding a culinary business. Updated 2 bedroom home w/ loft. This home has been well cared for & thoughtfully upgraded. Property surrounded by 100 acres of Crown land. An abundance of wildlife at your doorstep as well as snowmobile and ATV trails.

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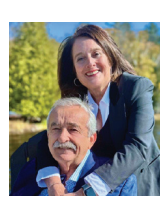
Broker
705-457-0364
www.lisamercer.ca
lisa@lisamercer.ca

613 MOUNTAIN ST $395,000

Immaculate & Cozy 3 bedroom home in the Village of Haliburton. Main Fl Bedroom with 4 pc Bath, 2 upper level bedrooms with ensuite Bath. Spacious Kitchen/Dining Area with Walkout. Full Basement. Walk to town for all amenities.



John & Marj Parish
John Parish 705-457-5485
Marj Parish 705-455-2211
Sales Representatives

33 ACRES + PRIVATE POND

- 📍 2179 South Lake Road
- 🏡 1,026 sq ft One Level Bungalow
- 🛏️ 3 Bedrooms 🛁 1.5 Baths
- 🌳 33+ acres with Private Pond
- 🚗 Detached 24x24 Garage built in 2023
- ☀️ Screened In Porches fun full length of home - Front & Back
- 💰 $525,000

Cheryl Smith
Sales Representative
705-455-2500
info@cherylsmithremax
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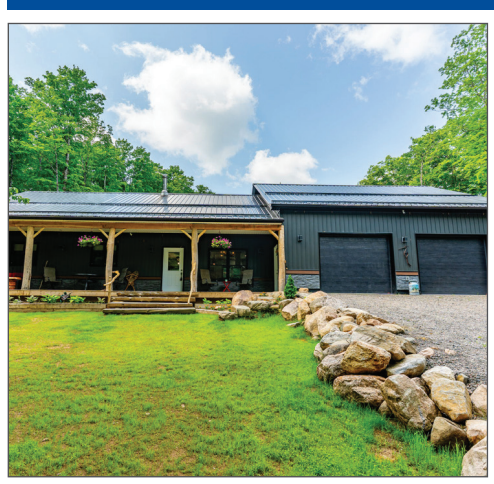
2430 HADLINGTON ROAD $885,000



This custom built (2022) home offers serene privacy and breathtaking forest views. The warm, rustic interior features natural wood finishes. Expansive windows fill the space, inviting the outdoors in. Enjoy tranquil mornings on the deck, and peaceful evenings surrounded by the quiet beauty of nature in every season. Massive garage for a workshop with lots of parking for large vehicles. Just under 10 acres.

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905-715-4569
sue-sotiriou.remax.ca

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$300,000
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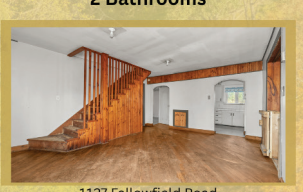
2 Bathrooms



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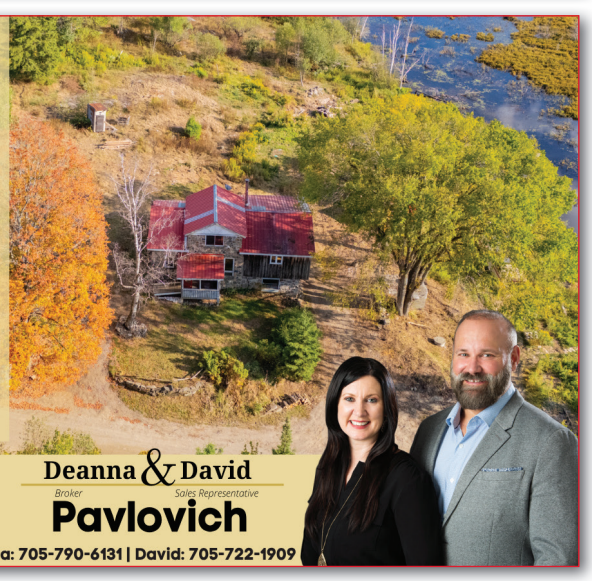

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Broker Sales Representative
Pavlovich

Deanna: 705-790-6131 | David: 705-722-1909

10 MINUTES FROM HALIBURTON $519,000

1 1/2 storey private home with 2+1 bedrooms and just over 1500 sq. ft. of living space - galley style kitchen with plenty of storage space - freshly renovated living area with new pot lighting - w/o to font and side deck - main floor laundry with a 2pc. bath - 3 pc bath on 2nd floor - new plank flooring on second floor - w/o partially finished lower level - FA propane heat - 1.58 acres of privacy

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ted@tedvasey.ca

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LITTLE GULL LAKE $629,000

Charming 2-bedroom, 1-bath cottage on Little Gull Lake, 10 minutes from Minden, featuring a private .89-acre lot with 120 feet of western-exposure waterfront for sunset views. The property includes updates like new windows, flooring, and a renovated bathroom. The deep, rocky shoreline is ideal for swimming, and the lake offers clear waters, jumping cliffs, and access to Queen Elizabeth parklands. Don't miss this one!

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• Above-Ground Pool and Hot Tub
• Beautiful private lot

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Sales Representative
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jackiedhardman@gmail.com

646 MOUNTAIN STREET $359,000

OPEN HOUSES - DEC. 11 & 12
9:00 - 11:00

Spacious, 2 BR bungalow w/great in-town location. 1100 sq ft., low maintenance EXT & lot, perfect home for seniors, empty nesters, snow birds or first time buyers. LR/DR features laminate floors & opens up to KIT w/ oak kitchen cabinets w/ pot drawers, lazy susan, pantry & breakfast bar that overlooks the DR. Large mud/laundry room w/laundry tub, built in cabinets. 4 pc bath. Master BR with his & hers closets, organizers, walkout to patio. Generous 2nd bedroom. Paved driveway. Walk to the Village of Haliburton. Town sewers

Deb Lambe
Sales Representative
705-854-0103
debra.lambe@gmail.com

Nature in your backyard

County Life welcomes photo submissions depicting life in the Highlands. Email emily@ haliburtonpress.com. Please ensure images are high resolution - 200 dpi, 10 inches at its longest edge.

Owl by Destiny Lapierre

Peeking pine marten by Tammy Nash

Brown Thrasher by Marty Schuster

Deer having a snack by Vivien Mausz

MAYNOOTH
Brighten the Night
SANTA CLAUS PARADE
Saturday, December 13th 5 pm

Let's get festive!

Maynooth Morning Market
Presents
The Maynooth Christmas Market
10am to 4pm
Emond Hall (gym) and Outdoor Courtyard
Hastings Highlands Centre, 33011 Hwy 62 N

Rummage Sale
Windsong United Church, Church St, Maynooth
10 am to 4pm

&
Visit Santa Claus
Hastings Highlands Public Library
2 pm to 4pm

Christmas Tree Lighting
Hastings Highlands Centre Courtyard
4pm

Set up and Judging of the Floats
No pre-registration necessary
Loggers Field, 104 Young Street, Maynooth
4pm-5pm

Prizes for Floats

Brighten the Night
Santa Claus Parade
Young Street & Main Street, 5pm
5 pm

Contact: Amy Doole,
Community Events Coordinator
eventscoordinator@hastingshighlands.ca
613-334-0716

Hastings Highlands
Beautiful By Nature

Hastings Highlands Public Library

Funded by the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario

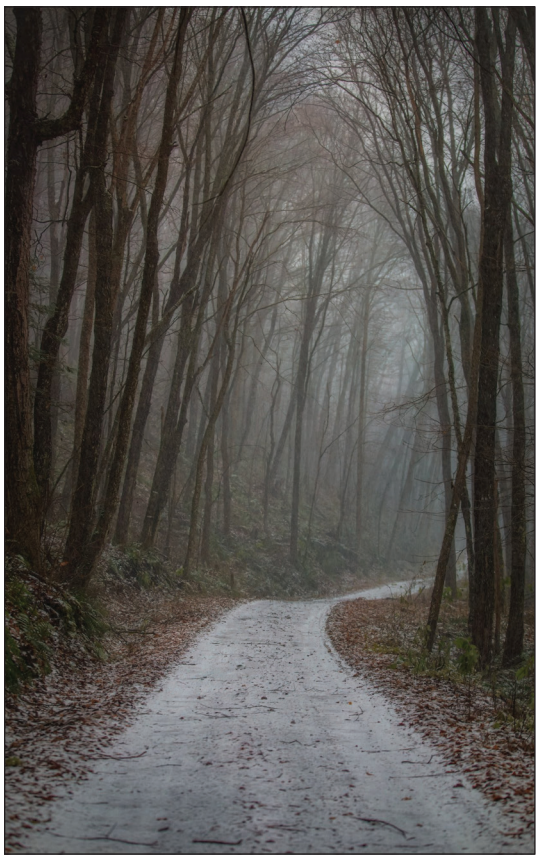
Financé par l'Agence fédérale de développement économique pour le Sud de l'Ontario

Canada

Coopers Hawk by Maggie Lawrence

Black capped chickadee by Jill Moulton

Woodpecker by Jill Moulton



A light snow by Tammy Nash

Deer eyes by Tammy Nash

Evening Grosbeaks enjoying some seed by Vivien Mausz

A pine marten snarl by Tammy Nash

Legion Events

Branch 441 Kinmount

Monday: Bid Euchre 1 p.m.
Tuesday: Closed
Wednesday: Mixed Darts, 7:30 p.m.
Thursday: Closed
Friday: Bingo- Doors open at 5 p.m., play at 6:45 p.m. Supper specials every Friday starting at 5 p.m. May purchase special and eat in club room downstairs. Clubroom opens at 4 p.m.
Saturday: Clubroom opens at 3 p.m. Meat draw 5:30 p.m.
Special events:
3rd Thursday of the month 7 p.m. executive meeting and 7:30 p.m. general meeting (members only)
3rd Sunday of the month Ladies Auxiliary Meeting (members only)
Hall rentals available at reasonable prices. Call 705-488-3462 or 705-928-7105. We welcome everyone to our events and we look forward to seeing you!

Branch 129 Haliburton

Mondays: Bridge 1 p.m. Schofield Rm. Youth darts 6:30 to 8 p.m. Clubroom 10 to 18 years of age. All are welcome, no experience necessary
Tuesdays: League darts 7 p.m.
Wednesdays: Bid Euchre 1 p.m. start – Main Hall. Bingo doors open at 6 p.m. Bingo 7 p.m. FirstWed of each month with jackpot. Follow Facebook.com/Branch129 Bingo for the most up-to-date information
Thursdays: General Meeting third Thursday of the month, 6:30 p.m. All members urged to attend. Ladies Auxiliary last Thursday of the month at 1 p.m.
Fridays: Five meat draw, five prizes each draw, first draw 4:30 p.m., last draw 6:30 p.m. Tickets $2 per draw. Paul Sisson, MC. Friday fun darts from 4:30 p.m. and onwards. 50/50 Draw 5:40 p.m.
Whether you're planning a function for 10 or 200, call Cheryl Waller at 905-447-7741, email haliburtonlegionrentals@gmail.com or visit haliburtonlegion.com. Everyone is welcome! Club room hours: Mon. 3 to 6 p.m., Tues. 3 to 9 p.m., Wed/Thurs. 3 to 6 p.m. Fri. 3 to 7 p.m.

Branch 636 Minden

Lunch - Monday to Friday
Monday: Rug Hookers every second week. Bid Euchre 1 to 3 p.m.
Tuesday: Food 5 p.m. Canoe FM Bingo 6 p.m.
Thursday: Cribbage 1 to 3 p.m., Darts 7 to 9 p.m. and Euchre 7 to 9 p.m.
Every other Friday: Karaoke 8 to 11 p.m.
Friday Fish & Chips, Wings. Lunch 11a.m. to 2 p.m. and Dinner 4 to 7 p.m.
Saturday All Day Breakfast 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. with three Meat draws at 11 a.m.
Call ahead any day for take-out: 705-286-4541. Schedules are subject to change without notice. Check our Facebook page Minden Legion Branch 636 for more info.

Branch 624 Wilberforce

Hours - Sunday: Special Events Only, Monday: 7 to 10 p.m., Tuesday: Closed, Wednesday: 2 to 10 p.m., Thursday: 2 to 6 p.m., Friday: 2 to 11 p.m., Saturday: 2 to 9 p.m.
Sunday:
Dec. 14 - L.A Breakfast $10. 9 to 11 a.m.
Monday:
Dec. 8, 15, 22, 29 Darts $5/player 7 p.m.
Wednesday:
Dec. 10, 17 Darts $5/player 2 p.m.
Quick Supper Menu changes weekly $10. 5 to 6:30 p.m.
Open Cribbage 6:30 p.m. – No need to pre-register
Thursday:
Dec. 11 HHHS Social Rec 10 a.m.
Friday:
Dec. 19 Wings and Jam Session $15/lb, 5 to 8 p.m.
Dec.12 Community Care 55+ Lunch $17, noon
Fish and Chips 1pc/$15, 2pc/$20
Saturday:
Dec. 6, 13, 20 Meat Draw 3 p.m.
Dec. 20 Nacho Average Trivia 7 p.m. $5/Player
Call the Legion for more info 705-448-222

Portrait of Nature: Local artist finds fresh canvas

ADAM FRISK
County Life Staff

Nature photographer June Krisko has spent nearly a decade capturing local wildlife, and is looking forward to starting a new chapter. /submitted

For the past seven years, local artist June Krisko has viewed the Haliburton Highlands through a lens of passion. While many photographers look for sweeping landscapes, she looks closer, seeking the ruffled feathers of a diving duck on the Gull River or the texture of wildflowers in her garden.

As winter approaches, the photographer is planning her next chapter with a move to the Huntsville area. While the move marks the end of her residency in Haliburton, the artistic identity she forged here will travel with her.

Krisko was educated in fine arts at Redeemer College and ceramics at Sheridan College, and spent years moving between Alberta and the Niagara region before settling in Haliburton. It wasn't until landing in the Highlands that the artist transitioned from digital art and Photoshop design to serious nature photography.

Her breakthrough with the medium came in 2019 with a show at the Rails End Gallery titled *Bird*, alongside wood artist Greg Gillespie.

"I showed my pictures of birds, and people were like, 'Oh, ah!' So I thought maybe this is something I should go into," Krisko recalled in a telephone interview last week. "That's when I started chasing the birds and really enjoyed it."

The photographer developed a passion for capturing the unique wildlife of the area, particularly during the winter months. She recounted the thrill of jumping out of her car in Minden to photograph diving ducks on the freezing river.

"You get some really unique types of ducks ... their feathers stick straight up," she said. "It's a turn-on rush. You look for different types and think, 'Oh, I haven't seen that one yet.'"

Krisko explained that for her, the medium is as important as the message. Influenced by the natural subject matter of her work, she adopted an environmentally friendly business model, utilizing recycled cardstock and biodegradable packaging.

"When I started focusing on nature photography... I wanted to reflect that in the work I create," she explained.

The artist sells photo greeting cards and calendars, which can be found at Castle Antiques & Cafe in Haliburton Village, made from eco-friendly materials. She also creates abstract paintings, viewing them as a deeply personal counterpoint to her photography.

"My painting, it's got to be something that's more personal, how I express myself as an artist," she said.

The road hasn't always been smooth. Her time in Haliburton involved living in a trailer while navigating building permit delays, financing hurdles, and the pandemic. Additionally, managing health issues made the isolation of rural living difficult.

Krisko explained that the move to Muskoka offers a practical solution. It places her husband closer to construction work at the new hospitals in Huntsville and Bracebridge, and places her closer to multi-level medical care.

"Having multiple health issues and being close to a hospital has been a priority," she said. "It's kind of a fresh start."

Despite the challenges, she said the move promises new artistic inspiration. Her new property features four acres of marshland, which the photographer anticipates will be teeming with the wildlife she loves to capture.

"It's really cool, it's all flat ... it's got a marshland in it," Krisko explained. "There's a lot of water right there, so there will be more types of birds."

When asked to describe her body of work as she prepares to pack up her lenses, she paused for a few moments before settling on a phrase that perfectly encapsulates her time in the Highlands.

"A portrait of nature," she said. "I find a lot of my stuff is more up close ... a moment in nature."

Krisko said she plans to maintain her connections with the Haliburton art community. For now, she is looking forward to December 10, when the new property closes.

"All my equipment needs to be cleaned. I'm looking forward to getting my big lenses out again," she said. "It's a fresh start and a fresh canvas."

Haliburton HIGHLANDS Seniors Active Living Centre

Check out this month's SALC events and activities for residents aged 55+

Genealogy for Seniors
December 2, 10, 17 and 18
@ various times

Needle Felting
December 4, 5, 10, 19
@ various times

Seniors Cooking Workshop
December 2 and 16 @ 3:30 p.m.

Seniors Fitness
Fridays @ 9 and 11

Senior Chair Fit Group
December 3, 13 @ 11 a.m.

Historical Holiday Traditions webinar
December 8 @ 10 a.m.

Painting Class
December 4, 18 @ 10 a.m.

Crafternoon
December 17 @ 1 p.m.

Drop-in Cards & Board Games
- Mondays 1 p.m. and Thursdays 7 p.m.
  Hosted at Minden Legion
- Saturdays 2:30 p.m.
  Hosted at Wilberforce Legion

Haliburton County Seniors Active Living Centre (SALC)
Through this program, older adults (55+) and seniors (65+) are invited to get active, make friends, and be well!
The SALC Program is designed to provide social, cultural, learning, and recreational opportunities for seniors to stay fit, healthy and socially connected in their communities.
SALC Programming is available in Haliburton County beginning in July 2025, through collaboration between the County of Haliburton and local municipalities, the Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility, and multiple partners.
For more information, visit haliburtoncounty.ca/SALC or pick up a full calendar at a participating SALC location, including a Legion or Library near you!

Funding for this program has been provided by the Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility.
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FOR SALE: Into the Blue Woodfired Pizza Business. Seasonal truck and catering business. Comes fully equipped and ready to go for the 2026 season. Contact info@abbeygardens.ca for more details and information

STORAGE

Indoor heated boat storage in Haliburton: $90 per foot for the season. Hydro provided. Call Brett at 647-405-0143

COMMERCIAL SPACE FOR RENT

Meeting Space for Rent: Blue Sky Studio at Haliburton Chiropractic. Bright open space downtown with private entrance and washroom. Available for rent by the hour, half or full day. Contact: **705-457-3500** info@haliburtonchiropractic.com

FOR RENT

Spacious one bedroom, one bath lower apartment located in the heart of Minden. The apartment provides a perfect blend of town and country living. Features include front door access, open concept living, in-unit laundry and outdoor living spaces, internet and preferential parking spots. $1,875 All inclusive plus shared hydro. Please Contact: 1-647-394-4899. Photos available upon request.

Newly renovated 2-unit house on 9.5 scenic acres near Haliburton. LOWER: 1-bed, 1-bath. Features open-concept living, new appliances, in-unit laundry and outdoor living spaces. 10 minutes from Haliburton & perfect for peaceful living. Contact: info@aboveboardcarpentry.com **705-455-2196**

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Bancroft - 2 bedroom walkout close to town $2,800 all inclusive New Build Contact **613-334-0357** for more information Available immediately.

Bancroft -Two bedroom walkout unit $2,500 All inclusive. Contact **613-334-0357** for more information Available immediately.

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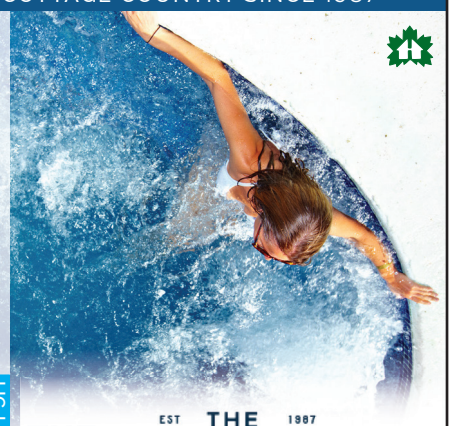

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Coboconk, Minden OPP to amalgamate

By Andrew Milne

The Coboconk and Minden OPP detachments will be amalgamated as of April, 1996.

Minden staff sergeant Dennis Edlington made the announcement December 7 to members of county council, at a 'visioning retreat' council called to make long range plans and to deal with challenges spinning out of recent reductions to local government transfer payment levels.

Edlington could not say yet where the new, amalgamated detachment's headquarters would be located. Much would depend, he says, on the movements of other government agencies expected to be closed or relocated in the next few months.

Staffing reductions should affect one position only — one of the two detachment commanders, says Edlington, will be phased out.

Edlington also said he does not expect the move is likely to force moves upon officers' families.

"We're looking," said Edlington, "at probably the biggest amalgamation or clustering in the province, because we're dealing with about 25 different townships, practically all of Haliburton county with the exception of Cardiff-Bicroft, and now we're looking at the addition of Longford, Laxton, Digby, Somerville, possibly Cavendish townships as well. All that would be managed out of one administrative centre."

Edlington also said he believes that the force will be able to adapt to the change, and continue to deliver quality service to its communities. Community policing initiatives put into place over the last few years are also amenable to the change, he said.

Said Edlington, "I don't see all the officers reporting to one facility to go to work... My personal vision is that the officers will report to work within the communities that they want to work in... Your communities are our first interest, but we have to serve your communities with the resources that we have. I hope to sit down with each and every reeve before this is finalized and make sure we are serving you as well as we possibly can."

He also said some difficulties were going to present themselves, in the case of communities especially remote from the new headquarters.

Said Edlington, "Depending on where the administrative centre is when this all washes out, there are going to be some communities on the fringes of these areas, and we're going to have to sit down and make some tough decisions as to where we can best serve you from."

Edlington also said that the community policing concept, along with improved communications between detachments in an era in which police have to be increasingly interdependent between jurisdictions, is already proving its worth, even in the absence of 24 hour coverage. He cited the case of a recent burglary/cigarette raid in Haliburton village.

(more on page 2)

OPP Constables Rob Orlowski and Terry Allore are seen here with a stack of cigarettes recovered from a break-in at the Haliburton Valu-Mart. Charged in conjunction with the break-in were Kevin Boissoneau and Clayton Hynes, both 21, of Sault Ste. Marie. See story on page 10.

Effect on Haliburton campus still unknown

Sir Sandford Fleming cuts staff, courses

By Andrew Milne

The president of Sir Sandford Fleming College announced last week that 13 of its 85 programs would be discontinued immediately, following budget cuts handed down by the provincial government.

The college announced that there would be layoffs associated with the cuts as well. The announcement was made December 7.

None of the programs cut were given at the Haliburton campus. However, the campus will in all likelihood see some of the layoffs.

The college is announcing a financial "emergency" to set in motion the associated layoffs.

Students currently enroled in the programs cut will be able to complete their diplomas at Sir Sandford. Additional admissions to the programs, however, will be discontinued starting September 1, 1996.

A union representative for the staff described the cuts as a 'horrendous' attack on the community, and on national values, and expressed dismay that opposition to the moves is being kept off balance by the speed of the government's actions on this and other fronts.

The cuts were part of the 20 per cent reduction in provincial transfer payments to community colleges announced by the government November 29.

President Brian Desbiens told *The Times* December 8 that the earliest possible layoffs would occur in January.

Haliburton campus principal Barb Bolin

(more on page 6)

Timothy Heming Ontario Junior Citizen of the Year

Former Achie Stouffer Elementary School student Timothy Heming, the son of Laurie and Rob Heming, has been selected to receive the Ontario Junior Citizen of the Year Award. The selection was announced Friday by the co-ordinating body, the Ontario Community Newspapers Association. The award is sponsored by Bell Canada.

Tim was nominated by a former neighbour, Sheri Hawkins, with letters of endorsement and support provided by the educational assistants and teachers at the school who worked with him, friends and relatives. The nomination was made through *The Times* (Earlier this fall, Tim and his family moved to Huntsville.)

Eleven year old Tim has spina bifida and hydrociphalus, two conditions which have resulted in numerous surgical interventions and spending all of his life in a wheel chair. Despite the consequences of these conditions, Tim has always been a cheerful and outgoing individual. It was his indomitable spirit and the example he set for others by living life to the fullest, despite what others may see as handicaps, which prompted the nomaination and immediately found support among all teachers and staff at Archie Stouffer Elementary School.

The Times will have a full report on Tim's award in next week's edition.

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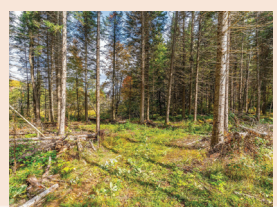

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